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THE UTILITY OF TEACHING-DEVICES

By J. WARSHAW

I

RECENT language texts show a clear and pronounced tendency toward pedagogics, particularly in the direction of teaching methods or devices. Even the ironical comments about turning linguistic handsprings, cutting figures of eight, and climbing the greased pole in French, Spanish, or German have failed to dam the current. Grammars are no longer bald statements of principles and reading books are no longer mere reprints of originals with dry historical and grammatical notes. The teacher as well as the pupil is having his innings. The old theory that the teacher needs no suggestion nor help is being discarded. Text-books are now not simply pupil-texts: they are teacher-texts, also.

At first blush, this would appear to reflect on the capabilities of language instructors or on their preparation or on their willingness to take pains. If the old-fashioned teacher got along without these prepared auxiliaries, why should they seem indispensable to the modern followers of the profession? Is it not fostering weakness and a spirit of routine to provide machine-made exercises? Do they not discourage initiative and inventiveness? Do they not uselessly expose the implements of the office to the student? Do they not place the novice and the expert, the fledgling and the patriarch on the same level? Do they not disparage experience?

It is possibly no adequate answer to say that the smaller the distance between the beginner and the veteran, the more advanced and the more perfect is the state of the occupation, profession,

trade, or craft. Subconsciously we feel that a knowledge of the tools of the trade should require nearly as long a period for mastery as a knowledge of the working-materials or subject-matter. Undoubtedly that is why we are insisting more and more on advanced training in schools of education. The time does not seem far distant when we shall demand of all language teachers a degree in education in addition to a major in French, Spanish, Italian, or German. Whatever our opinion may be of the justice of imposing this additional burden on those about to come into the fold, we must admit that language teachers have, in general, rarely prepared themselves to *teach* their subject. In grammar and literature they have had the necessary training: but they have paid slight attention to the means for communicating their learning.

Not, to be sure, that we have all to acquiesce in the pressure exerted by the schools of education. Many of us believe that there is a distinct limit to our teaching paraphernalia and that beyond a certain point educational courses are luxuries and unproductive of practical benefits to us as teachers of languages. If we have that indefinable but very evident thing called "personality" and if, in addition, we are endowed with a measure of that psychological instinct which enables us to deal tactfully with young people, we assume that but one other element is needed to complete our equipment. That element is method or methods or devices or whatever term you wish to use to dignify the tools of the trade. Methods or devices are our hammer and our chisel and our plane and our saw. Personality and the psychological sense we either cannot impart at all or can impart only imperfectly. The use of methods, however, along with the methods themselves, can be transmitted, and therein lies the function of pedagogical courses, in so far as we are concerned.

It is probably in view of the scant number of methods courses offered in our schools and of the slight incentive presented to the language teacher for perfecting himself in this most imperative branch that the makers of our pedagogical text-books are attempting to educate us in methods or devices. That they are sometimes carrying the multiplication of devices to an extent which seems excessive goes without saying. It is no uncommon occurrence to find a page or more of devices to a short preceding lesson. The old-

fashioned teacher, who has contented himself with saying, "Translate this," "Put this into French," "Read this," "Do this at sight," and who has considered his system thoroughly rounded-out with these few formulas and the meager variations which can be played upon them, looks on anything further as new-fangled notions of a suspicious nature and extremely derogatory to the dignity of his calling. However, we cannot afford to stand still out of pure deference to well-meaning persons who have got out of the habit of exercise.

As those who have used books of the sort recognize, a tolerable number of labor-saving and instructive devices enhances the value of a text. Their practical significance, of course, will be commensurate with the moderation exhibited in their employment and with the quality of selection made. To go beyond a rational measure in the matter of furnishing a text-book with devices is not only to expand a volume to an unnecessary and unwieldy size, but also to carry coals to Newcastle. Not all devices appeal to all teachers, and those which are regarded as ineffective by any teacher constitute so much waste space in that teacher's text and in the texts of his pupils.

It should be emphasized, however, that no harm can come from the constant invention of teaching devices and from the perpetual testing of their practicability. Comenius, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Gouin, Mme Montessori discovered no radically new principles in education. Their endeavors were confined to opening up new avenues of approach and to improving what one may speak of not too profanely as the "bow-wow" method of teaching. It would be maddening to have to acknowledge that the teaching of languages must remain stationary because no new avenues of approach are possible. Were such the case, we should be forced to look for our elementary teachers among robust, phlegmatic individuals whom no degree of monotony could daunt and no spirit of adventure could excite.

For the bane of elementary language teaching is the dry-rot of stagnation into which it may so easily degenerate. What can be more deadly than the incessant harping on the the remembrance of words and on the repetition of grammatical rules, the grinding out of passages of translation and the laborious laying of blocks of composition on top of one another? One or two years of it may be

endurable: but ten, twenty, or thirty years of it, if they do not kill the victim, should at least seriously maim him. Words, words, words—they are the body and soul of early language work and the despair of the veteran language teacher, unless there be a gate of escape, a way out into a fresher or, at any rate, a less belabored air. The escape is not nearly as feasible now as in the good old days before the separation of knowledge or learning into species. Your inspiring classical teacher of the past was, often without realizing it, and generally without being personally responsible for it, far more than a teacher of languages. He was a philosopher, a historian, an ethnologist, a physicist, a social cicerone, a military strategist. His Latin and his Greek were primarily pegs on which to hang a general education. His scholarly interests were sharpened rather than blunted by his daily grind. His excursions into the civilizations of earlier peoples educated both him and his pupils. Words were never his only mental pabulum. If his task ever grew dull, it was because he himself was growing dull. The possibilities for spiritual recreation, hard thinking, and variety of subject-matter were almost endless. That is why we have a well-founded tradition of great teachers of the classics. They were intrinsically no better than the vast majority of modern language teachers of the past or the present, but they were more fortunate in their environment and in their epoch.

Specialization and the steady trend toward the division of labor have completely changed the rôle of the language teacher. Philosophy is now to be obtained in the department of philosophy; history, in the department of history; physics, in the department of physics; art, in the art department. In a few instances, because of the unfortunate situation in which the classical languages have been placed by modern conditions, one or two earnest classical teachers undertook the interesting task of reviving the ancient status of classical teaching, of presenting the philosophy, the history, the art, and the sociology of the Greeks and the Romans in the language department. But the experiment is anachronistic and is not likely to develop into a settled policy. The language teacher has in these days only a negligible standing as a humanist. He is without authority, can emit opinions of a general or specific character outside of his linguistic province only with fear and trembling, and is looked at askance by those officially in charge of

the various departments which have been mentioned. To the shoemaker his last, and to the teacher of languages as such, his vocabularies, his grammatical drill, and his verbs. Not to be able to indulge in the exhilarating sport of reasoning or of intellectual curiosity in so far as one's class-work is concerned; always to be condemned to the wheel of memorizing: that is a fate which no teacher should envy another. It is no special pleasure to be aware that you are first and foremost an intellectual blacksmith and that your forte is repetition.

Gainsay it as many are in the habit of doing, though, our specific function nowadays in elementary language work is to render the mechanics of language as nearly automatic as possible, and our chief agencies are repetition, drill, review, analogy, and a few other processes but little connected with the creative faculties. Some of us may, in the short time allotted to us, try to liberalize our subject by educational and instructive material, but the risk we take of detaching the mind of the student from the work immediately before him, namely, the learning of the mechanics of the language, is a real one. There is much point to Lewis Chambaud's observation in the preface of his *Grammar of the French Tongue* (1805): "The French Refugees are a striking proof of this. An English Gentleman hearing an old French Refugee say, that he had been fifty years in England, and expressing his surprise that he could not speak English at all, 'Lack-a-day, Sir, said the Frenchman, what English can one learn in fifty years? *Hélas, Monsieur, qu'est ce qu'on peut apprendre d'Anglois en cinquante ans . . .*'" Our difficulties and our obligation to persist in our oftentimes arid toil become manifest when we perform the simple calculation that six months of study and of exposure to French or Spanish in France and Spain are equivalent to something like twenty-four college semesters.

If this analysis is not fantastic, we can get an inkling of the importance of teaching-devices in language instruction. It is largely by the invention, the gathering, and the use of them that the teacher preserves some of his sprightliness and his sanity, and it is through the application of them that the recitation becomes an interesting hour instead of a humdrum droning away of precious minutes. They are one of the main gates of escape for ourselves and our pupils. They bear the same relation to our art or science

or whatever you choose to call it that the finely differentiated instruments and laboratory accessories of the scientist bear to his science. They are, in fact, our laboratory. I have seen the attitude of an excellent teacher toward her subject revolutionized by the acquisition of a usable list of practical devices. Her admirable personality and judgment had previously been hampered by confinement to a scant number of regulation teaching "methods," and she had not had the temerity to strike out into new paths. The devices were a revelation both to her and to her classes.

Any teaching device is, after all, a method. It is an aid in the presentation of new content and a means of re-enforcing what has once been treated. If it fails to accomplish either of these objects, it is not a successful device or method. It is, in addition, a potent factor in lending life to class-work. It gives suppleness to recitations and should not detract from the clinching of linguistic principles. When it does not clinch them, it misses its goal.

From the standpoint of the student, such devices are attractive because of the elements of surprise and variety which they contain. We must not forget that students are human beings and that they crave novelty, variety, and surprise and detest drudgery, like the rest of us. Their interest must be constantly stimulated, and especially in a subject like language which, however you may desire to rid yourself of the thought, depends in major part on the least agreeable of the mental faculties, memory. To go on with the drab routine of antiquated language teaching means the retention of medievalism in a modern scheme of things. Whatever defects may be inherent in our modern effort to put lightness, flexibility, color, and movement into teaching, we must be willing to tolerate them because of the obvious advantages of which they are, when all is said and done, only a rather unimportant accompaniment. Nor need we feel unsupported by some of the best educators of the past. Comenius, the venerable dean of pedagogy in the seventeenth century, who was considered for the presidency of Harvard College after the death of President Dunster, foresaw the need of enlivening teaching methods and achieved a remarkable feat of prophecy in his *Orbis Pictus* and his *Janua Linguarum*. Our pictorial representations in textbooks, our realien, and numerous others of our devices found in him an early, ardent, and most competent advocate.

Methods without method are like experiments without a purpose. There may be some good in them, but that is problematical, and the energy consumed is an almost total waste product. The teacher who employs a method or device merely because it offers variety and whiles away the class-period is as much a traitor to his trust and an idle opportunist as the elementary language teacher who delivers an unnecessary lecture or reels off joke after joke solely because he has a flow of words and is irked by the labor of drilling and testing. Behind each device there must be perfectly visible the query, "What will it accomplish and when should it be used?"

No comprehensive study of language devices has yet been made. We have a few books on language teaching which detail some of the methods available and are often indicative of others. But a critical and scientific examination of language methods or devices has never been compiled. For hundreds of years we have been plying our trade without a reasoned catalog of the tools with which we have to work. A monograph or a volume on the topic would fill a real want. In the absence of such separate treatment, we must feel grateful to the writers of text-books who have stepped into the breach, no matter what success has attended their attempt. In all probability, the most logical arrangement would be to have tables of desirable devices incorporated in the introduction or added as an appendix to our text-books. Teachers could then choose at will and according to the suitability of the different devices. Indeed, much would be gained by making such tables an integral part of elementary language books along with the maps, pictures, and lists of class-room expressions which are finally becoming a standard fixture.

The following charts will suggest some of the ways in which series of language devices may be concisely presented. No claim is made for special originality either in the devices themselves or in the general plan. Suggestions have been taken wherever met, whether in pedagogical journals or in discussions with my students in our course on the Teaching of Spanish. My students found it worth while to enlarge some of these charts on heavy drawing-paper and keep them close at hand for ready reference and progressive observation. Perhaps others may regard this as a useful procedure.

II

SECTION OF A CHART FOR TESTING AND AUDITING DEVICES

No.	Device	September						Remarks and Conclu- sions	October, etc.
		M.	T.	W.	Th.	F.	etc.		
1.	Flash cards.								
2.	Pupil writes in alphabetical order lists of new words appearing in lesson.								
3.	Pupil keeps scrap-book of pictures with Spanish, French etc., equivalents for objects								
4.	Exercises in numbers and arithmetical operations.								
5.	Teacher reads review translation: class translates.								
6.	Class gives lists of synonyms.								
7.	Exercise in the changing of tenses.								
8.	Students look over page at sight, close books, and tell what they have seen. Time-limit for looking over page.								

Comments:

1. By putting a mark in the day-square, the teacher knows definitely what device he has used at each recitation. He can thus combine variety with the special object which he wishes to accomplish each day.

2. A cross (x) or a check-mark (✓) may be placed in the day-square to show that the device is successful. A zero may be used to indicate that the device has been valueless or of doubtful value. By testing devices in this fashion, each teacher will soon satisfy himself experimentally as to the merits of any device.

3. If a particular device has been successful in combination with another, the number of the second may be put in the day-square of the first.

4. The column of "Remarks and Conclusions" may be reserved for pertinent or somewhat extended comment.

5. A group of teachers, by comparing their charts, might find the results worthy of collective discussion. A proper evaluation of the devices may, of course, more exactly be arrived at when the testimony of various experimenters is available.

6. In connection with teacher-training classes, assignments from the chart might be made by the supervisor so as to enable the beginning teacher to try himself out on the principal implements of his vocation. If the novice has a set of practical devices as a guide, he may be induced to spend a little more time on the preparation of content. One of the bugbears of the novice in preparing the coming lesson is to know *what to do next*. It not infrequently happens, also, that novices and others suffer embarrassment in class because they have run out of working material and have to spar for time during the remainder of the hour.

University of Nebraska.

(To be concluded.)

SELECTION OF READING TEXTS IN AMERICA AS VIEWED FROM ABROAD¹

By ALBERT SCHINZ

THE TITLE of this paper was worded by the Chairman of the program committee. This statement will dispel at once, I am sure, the fear you may have felt that I was to assume the attitude of a critic. I am particularly anxious to say this, since altogether too many things in our Modern Language Departments have been "viewed from abroad" of late, and I would be sorry indeed to incur the reproach of encouraging this tendency; whatever "viewpoint from abroad" comes in, will be of comparison and not of criticism, for the first thing to be remembered in approaching this subject is that American instruction in the twentieth century has not, cannot have, must not have, in many particulars, the features it has in Europe, where traditions, life, aspirations, the whole organization of academic life, differ very much.

It is not a question of passing judgment, from one point of view, it is a question of understanding both points of view; and it is, I suppose, to the fact that I have been brought up in Europe and taught very long in America, that I owe the honor of being asked to speak today. It is by *comparison* that very often we succeed in seeing more clearly; it is *comparing* that I am perhaps in a better position to do than some of us here.

Just one thing more by way of introduction: Even when we understand rightly it is unbecoming to be dogmatic. It is not necessary either. When not mere individuals, but groups of people, nations, classes, are concerned, the goal is reached in human affairs by unconscious groping, rather than by conscious proceedings. It may take a long time—but as the plant turns unconsciously toward the sun, so human society turns unconsciously towards light. The best we can do as individuals is to find out, by careful observation, and try to determine, which

¹ Read before the Modern Language division of the N.E.A. at Milwaukee, July 30, 1919.

various *courants et contre-courants* are accidental and which fundamental. This is not so hard to tell. Then, once conscious of the desirable ones, we can work in order to help these along more intelligently, more deliberately; and we shall then reach the end more rapidly.

Thus my task is not to tell where we *must* go, what we *must* do; if I succeed in telling what rational things we are actually and unconsciously trying to achieve, what we are already in the process of doing, that will be enough.

I

The first—natural—tendency when modern language study was assuming serious proportions in America, was to inquire what school books they read over in France, Germany, Italy, and Spain, and to take them over in our courses of French, German, Italian and Spanish. Indeed this natural thing was *not* the right thing to do: for the texts brought in—after the very first stage of the “Reader”—were the classics, Corneille, Racine, Molière, etc., (allow me to use French as illustration). But they were works intended over there to study *literature*, or *artistic language*; and it was possible to use them to advantage in the countries where the children knew the tongue of these authors as their native tongue; they could appreciate such texts. For young Americans who had just started, not only were such beauties not appreciated at that early stage, but, being above the comprehension of the pupils, the latter wasted good energy in vain efforts. The children must know first the plain language; they must not be given meat before they are weaned.

Sooner or later the mistake of teaching literature instead of teaching language, was bound to be realized; and indeed about ten years ago a vigorous campaign was started to drive classics out of our high schools and preparatory schools, and out of first and second year College courses. Dr. Sachs of New York was one of the decided advocates of this sound movement: the insistence of high schools and preparatory schools on teaching classics, he called right out a “bluff.” This campaign has now almost completely succeeded; still there are some who keep the old system, as shown in the report of Mr. Van Horne in the *Modern Language Journal*, January, 1919. Even in some colleges they still read in the

first year, *Atala*, or *Notre Dame de Paris*, *Pêcheur d'Islande*, or *French Lyrics*; or in the second year *Le Misanthrope*, *Andromaque*, or *Cinna*, or *17th Century French Readings*, or Rousseau, or *Cinq Mars* or *Le Curé de Tours*.

We must complete the task so well begun, and clean out. This is my first point.¹

We must not be surprised however, if the prejudice is hard to eradicate in certain quarters. Did not a man like Lanson suggest that we ought to pay more attention to literature in our language classes? Have we not repeatedly heard French people who propose series of French classics for our schools, and who come with elaborate plans for marvelous reading so as to make out of American children very rapidly little Thuroldi, or Montaignes, or Descartes, or Racines . . . ?

II

After the phase of beautiful, but naïve idealism, which introduced exquisite wine into paper bags, came another which was a reaction against that. The cry "practical language" was uttered, and . . . alas! joined hands with the movement for natural method, which too often was used for miserable attempts to learn a language *without* method; and the two together gained a great momentum. Not only did teachers take non-classic texts, but among these non-classic texts, they chose what were called idiomatic texts—and idiomatic meant, more frequently than anything else, slang, or argot. They thought that they were echoing the 17th Century cry of Malherbe, for the language *des crocheteurs des halles*, which any way was not the cry against elegant language, but against Latin and Greek pedants. Such texts, e.g., as *La Belle Nivernaise*, stuffed with slang, did more harm than good. . . . And that tendency still prevails. I know of many schools and colleges who took up *Chantecler*, and some have recently taken Barbusse's *Le Feu*, both of which are in many passages, not easy even for French people. That tendency was represented even more in Exercise books—long lists of idiomatic expressions were administered to the pupils, the method conveying the absurd idea

¹ I do not say that isolated fragments of classics are always to be excluded e.g., the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme's* scene of the philosopher teaching phonetics is perfectly legitimate as an extract in a French Reader.

that a language could really be mastered only by the parrot method, and as if the plain words and the sentences composed correctly and according to intelligible rules would not make perfectly good French.

François's 'plancher des vaches,' I am afraid can never be eradicated from the French vocabulary of young Americans—and such abominations are many.²

Here again—here especially—the statistics of Mr. Van Horne are very valuable and encouraging. They show plainly that we are getting cured, and that, as a higher and more earnest class of teachers comes in, the more reasonable view of things obtains. The most popular books read in the last five years, are, all told, also very good from the point of view of language: *Perrichon* and *Colomba*, *L'Abbé Constantin*, stories of Maupassant and Daudet.

The most widely read text of the first year in College is *Perrichon*, of the second year *Colomba*. This is as it should be—and I feel sure that gradually we shall, by the unconscious process of elimination of less commendable texts, get a very excellent list. Let teachers continue their search, and let such ballots be taken as Mr. Van Horne has done; let the results spread, and we will improve. High school teachers will follow the movement. Our text book firms themselves have already realized the value of the voice from the teacher: they are all anxious to have editions of texts ballotted on in that way. This is moreover, a very democratic way of doing things, and avoids the danger of poor authority—for authority is not always good. In Europe the selection of text books is made by a Minister of Public Instruction, or some higher authority of that sort. That makes for unity. But while in some countries, like France, it has had the best results, (their texts are always admirably chosen and remarkably well edited—for French children), there is no doubt in my mind that in this country the ballot system will have more chance to achieve the right thing. I do not see that, e.g., in the state of New York, where they have The University of the State of New York organized on the same plan as the old University of France, the choice of text books is

² François' *Advanced French Composition* is, except for a few expressions similar to the one mentioned, an excellent book.

superior to what it is in other states. So here again—this is my second point—things are well under way.

III

There is one point, however, where we have hardly started on the good road. Here once more the intentions were very good, but the method is open to discussion. In the same spirit in which schools in an effort to do serious work had turned toward the classics, so they endeavored to do *much* work by reading *many* pages. This—to me—is at present the great stumbling block of modern language teaching. And I am in a position to observe the results rather closely. We get about 250 to 300 students at Smith College each fall, entering with three years of French, and going on with that language. They come from all the States, and they offer, with very few exceptions, the same defect: harrowing inaccuracy in reading and writing. Our efforts must all be directed at first, not towards having the students learn more, but towards having them unlearn mistakes which were not corrected at the beginning, and have become bad habits. And if you turn once more to Mr. Van Horne, you find how, today, this gross confusion of *many* and *much* seems deeply set, and how the amount of work done is measured by the number of pages read or written. The average reading, he tells us, in the first year in College is 300 pages (298); the second year 700 pages (686). Some go over 700 the first year (and remember that they are studying grammar too), and over 1200 the second year. This is incompatible with accuracy in reading, and also (which is almost as serious) incompatible with pleasure in reading. No demonstration is necessary here. We must read less and better; for if we read less and better at the beginning, we can read faster and still better later. This will surely come; it is my third point.

I wish I could say that the remark of Mr. Van Horne, that he has noticed since the war began a tendency to read less, were not accompanied by his explanation—namely, that more time is given to oral conversation work. If this explanation is correct, it means that children read just as carelessly as before; they are reading less only because they give less time to it.

I quite understand that the laboring for weeks on the same story is not desirable, is monotonous to the student. Here I may

be allowed to suggest the method we have adopted at Smith College, (and no doubt elsewhere they have it too) that is to assign, let us say eight pages a day, but one or two of them to be read very accurately. So the student has the satisfaction of reading a good deal, and yet he does not neglect accuracy. Also this idea of stimulating interest by renewing the material read, ought to make us favor shorter text books; short stories as a rule, rather than novels. As to plays, in spite of the general idea that they are good because they have conversational style, they seem to me rather undesirable for this psychological reason: the longest play is written for presentation within two or two and a half hours; therefore if you drag the material over weeks, the effect of somnolence is almost unavoidable. Even *Perrichon* in abbreviated form reads better in class than the complete *Perrichon*.

IV

Little time is left to deal with texts for literature courses. I am not quite sure whether it was the intention of the program committee that I should touch on this point.

Let me only suggest two things: first, we will surely follow the good road if we continue to read first of all the great masterpieces—such as have been recognized by universal consent. Although we are improving here also, how often does it not happen that we find in our classes of literature, students who have read some out-of-the-way poem or novel, or drama, and who have not read the standard works? It is unbearable pedantism to substitute our personal likings to the judgment of the world; we must have individuality, but not at the expense of our beginning students.

It is dangerous, as a rule, to use indiscriminately text books published abroad, and I wish to point out two categories that are bad: as a textbook for the history of literature, Lanson is not to be recommended, at least for beginners; it is intended for students who have read authors and want a guide to appreciate them; but some of us put the book in the hands of students before they have read the authors. The result is the disreputable vagueness of knowledge and thought which men teaching natural sciences reproach us for constantly. Then I see, for example, Pellissier, the 17th, 18th, or 19th century "*par les textes*." This again is a book for France not for us. The author says explicitly that he meant to leave alone

the texts which are easily accessible, and take only such texts by classic writers as are not usually well known, and such by authors of second rank as may be interesting. In other words these texts presuppose that all the standard texts have been read before, but some of us use them with beginners.

The second suggestion is that, unless we can read the book with our students, we do not put it in their hands. I know of editions of *Atala* and of *René* where the passage explaining this story is left out—to spare the child's innocence. In this case let us leave the books alone altogether; they are of no more use than a watch from which you have removed the spring, and we must not have our students consider it quite unobjectionable to read a book without a point. I must say that year after year Racine embarrasses me. His formidable sensualism under his fine language is a problem. I could never read *Phèdre* in class room; even *Andromaque* is no easy task;—if you do not make it plain, it is of no use; if you do explain, it is certainly not of moral advantage to young people in the dangerous age.

By association of ideas—association by contrast—I take this occasion to warn against the opposite evil. Many still think, for example, that literature begins to be real, only when it is objectionable, and that all that is normal and *only* beautiful is goody-goody. The absurdity is obvious, and I will not give a demonstration. But what I may add is that we professors are apt to misjudge our students in their tastes. I had a few weeks ago a remarkable experience. Owing to the absence of an Amherst college professor, I was asked to offer once a week to the Amherst boys a course on the French novel. Many of them had had such a course, but came because I gave mine in French. Now those men (30 in all) had read quite a Frenchy list of French novels, from the medieval *Tristan et Iseult*, to *Madame Bovary*, passing through *le Roman comique* and *Manon Lescaut*. So one week I gave them to read—it came in naturally—*Paul et Virginie*. And I was much surprised to find in the weekly report they handed in that they had liked the story very much; several confessed they had found it the most interesting novel of the course, and some were positively lyric about it; when the final examination came, I still found reminiscences of the effect produced. I am sure others than I will find this a plain illustration of the fact that we must not depend too

much upon our preconceived ideas about students. Our students are sound as a rule. I must however tell the story to the end. A little later I tried the same experiment in an 18th century class at Smith College; the result was, according to appearances, different. I feel sure that many of the sixty girls in that class liked the story, but (this is an aspect of the everlasting Eve) they were ashamed to say so for fear of ridicule; some clearly stated that they did not like it as they found it too "uni" and too "moral." And, by chance, one day during that very week, a book dealer of Northampton asked me to give titles of some good French books for city customers; he said that he had shown the French books of our 19th century course to a college alumna who had declared that these books seemed to have been selected by a Sunday-school teacher. . . . Yet there was George Sand, Musset, Flaubert, and the most triangle-maniacs like Bataille, Bernstein and Hervieu. The truth of the matter was probably that this woman thought it beneath her dignity as a cultivated woman to read plainly good books. However that may be, these very amusing manifestations of feminine psychology are of no consequence, except that they betray a tendency which does exist, and which, for the reputation of American good sense, must be done away with quickly.

Smith College.

P.S.—Some teachers, at the close of the meeting where this paper was read, have asked for suggestions as to texts that might be read with profit, as the speaker had rather dealt with such as ought to be avoided. By way of answer we recall the ten first numbers of the symposium of Mr. Van Horne: *First Year*. Perri-chon, Belle France, Aldrich and Foster, Abbé Constantin, Colomba, Daudet, Maupassant, Français et sa patrie, Madame Thérèse, Tour de France. *Second Year*. Colomba, Misérables, Hernani (for reasons given above we would not recommend this at all), Gendre de M. Poirier, Daudet, (Short stories), Tartarin, Mare au Diable, Maupassant, Roi des Montagnes, Livre de mon Ami. In the third year, some good stiff texts ought to be chosen to show the pupils that, because they can understand easily easy French, they do not know French quite yet—and need preparation before coming to class. Hugo, Balzac, Gautier, Loti are good authors. At Smith we take *Jettatura* which has a remarkable vocabulary, and in the second term we take Victor Hugo's *Poems*

which, besides new difficulties in language, give an opportunity to initiate the student into French Versification, so that the next year they know how to read Corneille, Racine and Molière's verses. Many of these poems are good stories, like *La Conscience*, *Mariage de Roland*, *Aymerillot*, *Cimetière d'Eylau*, *Après la Bataille*, *Pauvres Gens*. Then there are the Napoleonic poems which afford no dull reading either; the poems of the Childhood of Hugo, and the like.

PHONETICS AS A BASIS FOR TEACHING SPANISH

By FRED A. HAMANN

OF LATE years the modern foreign languages are being taught more and more like living languages; hence, more attention is being paid to pronunciation, for the first thing to be studied in a modern language is not its grammar but its phonetics, that is, its sounds and their combinations in connected speech, as this furnishes the only scientific and practical basis for acquiring, as well as for teaching the standard pronunciation of a given language.

The teacher, therefore, especially if using the direct or a conversational method, should first give a very large amount of phonetic drill; for if the student fails to overcome at the very outset the natural inertia of undisciplined muscles, he will simply use slipshod approximations, that is, he will substitute the sounds of his mother tongue, and his further progress will chiefly consist in learning to pronounce badly with greater ease, without being aware of his vocal atrocities. Thus the law of habit will not aid, but only hinder him in the mastery of a correct pronunciation, and a faulty pronunciation will result, which is not only difficult to correct, but which, in turn, would deprive the student of much pleasure and above all of his confidence in learning to speak and sing in the foreign tongue, as well as to appreciate in the highest degree such literary forms as poetry, drama, and the oration. Consequently, the beginner should be given first of all a solid foundation for the correct production of the foreign sounds by means of physiological explanations and phonetic drill in at least five to ten lessons before the systematic study of grammar is taken up, and afterwards in connection with the latter, preferably at the beginning of the lesson for a few minutes, in order to tune up the organs of speech. Now, all this is being urged more and more for French, but seldom for Spanish. For this reason, I shall endeavor to show the imperative need of Spanish phonetics, in acquiring and imparting the Castilian pronunciation, by trying to bring out the main differences between the Spanish basis of articulation and

that of English with occasional references to those of French and German; for a mistaken notion is abroad that a correct Spanish pronunciation is easy to attain, and that the spelling of Spanish words is more phonetic than it really is. The faulty and often intolerable pronunciation of the majority of Spanish students points to the advisability of using practical phonetics in Spanish also, in order to avoid employing certain sounds of one's mother tongue in Castilian pronunciation, which is favored by the vast majority as the standard of Spanish for the following reasons: (1) The Royal Academy of Spain, as well as the literary and educated men of practically all Spanish countries consider Castilian as the standard. (2) The American pronunciation of Spanish has no single standard but is readily understood by all, and vice versa, one who speaks Castilian can easily acquire the dialect of any Spanish country. (3) It facilitates the acquisition of correct spelling, being more phonetic, as the sounds of 'c,' 'z' and 'j' are distinguished from 's' and 'g.' I shall base my assertions in what follows on Mr. Tomás Navarro Tomás' excellent book '*Pronunciación Española*,' which, in my opinion, contains perhaps the most practical and popular presentation of the subject, and to a lesser degree on Mr. A. Colton's treatise '*La Phonétique Castellane*' which is more theoretical.

I regret to state, however, that Mr. Tomás does not use the International Phonetic Alphabet, with which the majority of teachers no doubt have become familiar thru the study of French, German and English. Now many will say that phonetic symbols are entirely out of place in the classroom. I, however, consider their use essential for the teacher and desirable for the student, as one of the greatest phonetic aids, especially in comparing Spanish sounds with those of other languages. Moreover, there are already several good beginners' books on the market in which not only a good phonetic introduction is found, but also the International Phonetic Alphabet, among them Hanssler and Parmenter's *Beginners' Spanish* and Moreno-Lacalle's *Elementos de Español*, as well as his *Elements of Spanish Pronunciation*, which contains also a carefully worked out plan of ten lessons on pronunciation with many exercises.

I hope the day is not far off when a unanimous agreement shall have been reached whereby this alphabet is to be used exclusively

for the purpose of standardizing the phonetic transcription of all modern languages.

Now, there is a certain degree of confusion, as well as disagreement among the best known authorities on the subject of Spanish pronunciation, which, according to Colton, seems to be due to the fact that the Castilian pronunciation appears to be in a period of transition with respect to the pronunciation of a number of vowels and consonants, as well as to quantity and division of syllables. However, Josselyn is rather inclined to attribute it to the Spanish basis of articulation, which is more lax than that of any other Romance language. He says, for example, at the very outset of his *Études de phonétique espagnole* that this lax articulation leads to a considerable variation in the pronunciation of the same individual and tends to render the absolute classification of vowels difficult. On the other hand, it is this characteristic that, in my opinion, permits the Spanish articulation to become so harmonious, elegant, and soft.

The action of the organs of speech is, in general, less energetic in Spanish than in French and in the stressed syllables of English and German, but much more precise and definite, especially in the pronunciation of the vowels, than in the weakly stressed syllables of English words, in which, as a rule, only the consonants are sounded distinctly, the vowels being slurred over and even dropped, whereas in Spanish the vowels remain clear and full, but the consonants become lax. This may be seen by comparing the Spanish with the English pronunciation of the following words, which have the same spelling and meaning in both languages: *honor*, *pastor*, *vulgar*, *universal*, *adorable*, cf. also pronunciation (E.): *pronunciación* (S.). This clear-cut articulation of Spanish is due, in my opinion, to the manner of expelling breath in the production of the Spanish sounds, more uniformly and less intermittently than in English. On the other hand this uniformity in expelling breath accounts for the greater uniformity of Spanish vowels with respect to quality and quantity, as well as for the absence of the vanishing sound which is so characteristic of the English long vowels, as in 'too, know, say, see.' Compare with these the Spanish words: *tú*, *no*, *sé*, *sí*. Though in Spanish orthography there are only the five elementary vowels 'u,' 'o,' 'a,' 'e,' 'i' ('y' being pronounced like 'i' when it is a vowel) which are usually

represented in phonetic transcription by [u], [o], [a], [e], [i], still there exist also in Castilian, different shades of these vowels, especially of the vowels 'e' and 'o.' However, for practical purposes in the classroom the various shades, which Araujo calls 'matices flotantes' and 'fugaces variantes' may be safely ignored in ordinary transcription, as they are not distinctive varieties, as in English, French, and German, being occasioned by the accent, the adjoining consonant, the vowel in the next syllable, etc.

Nevertheless, a few general rules like the following might be given: At the end of a stressed syllable the Spanish vowels are regularly 'close,' that is [u], [o], [e], [i], as in the English words 'rule,' 'so,' 'they,' machine' without becoming, however, as tense and long as in the strongly stressed English vowels, for there is less lip rounding for the vowels [u] and [o], it being more a case of interior than exterior rounding; cf. too (E.): tú (S.), no (E.): no (S.). For [e] and [i] the corners of the mouth are not so much retracted; cf. they (E.): té (S.); me (E.): mí (S.). On the other hand, in stressed syllables ending in a consonant, the vowels are pronounced 'open,' that is more as in the English words 'put,' 'or,' 'there,' 'is.' Cf. *tu-bo* [u]: *pun-to* [U], *mo-da* [o]: *cos-ta* [ɔ], *me-sa* [e]: *papel* [ɛ], *si-no* [i]: *tín-ta* [I]. However, 'e' in a syllable closed by 'n' or 's' is close, i.e., [e], as in *a-ten-to*, *pes-ca*, while 'e' and 'o' before the 'i' and 'y' are open, i.e., [ɛ], [ɔ], as in *reina*, *rey*, *oiga*, *soy*. The vowel 'a' is pronounced like 'a' in 'father' before the consonants 'j' and 'g,' before the vowels 'o' and 'u,' as well as in a syllable closed by 'l,' as in *bajo*, *pago*, *caos*, *causa*, *mal*; otherwise 'a' is usually sounded as in 'bath,' 'ask.' Between stressed syllables vowels become still more lax, but they remain clear and definite and do not become so indistinct as in English, where any unstressed vowel may become [ə], or disappear, as in *tí-tu-lo*, *sím-bo-lo*, cf. 'symbol' [simbl], *tím-pa-no*, *in-tér-pre-te*, *tí-mi-do*. According to the law of vowel harmony, which is the influence that a vowel in a syllable exercises upon the vowel in the preceding syllable, the weakly stressed final vowels 'a' and 'o' close the accented vowel of the preceding syllable ('a' more than 'o'), so that in *esa*, *eso*, *ese*, for instance, the accented 'e' has three distinct shades, without failing to be close in the three cases; cf. also *so-la*: *so-lo*. Another sign of laxity is also found in the articulation of the frequent sounds for 'u' and 'i' ('y'), without the

accent mark, before a vowel, when they become the semi-vowels [w], [j], as in *cual* [w], labial [j].

The action of the glottis is not very energetic either and no glottal stop precedes the initial vowels as in German; hence there is a tendency in vowel linking to convert two or three adjoining vowels into a monosyllabic group without losing the characteristic shade of each vowel as in *la unión: laurel, yo he ido a Europa*. Two vowels of the same kind regularly form a single vowel in ordinary speech, as in *la Habana, que el, alcohol, ángulo oscuro*; while in rapid speech, as well as in singing, weakly stressed vowels are regularly absorbed, for the stronger the syllabic accent, the more likely is the vowel to disappear, as 'e' in *sabe usted, de otra manera, me ha visto*.

Altho nasalization of vowels does not play a very important part, having no distinctive value, the vowels in certain positions, especially between nasal consonants, are frequently nasalized, pointing to a lax position of the uvula, as in *nunca* [ũ], *monte* [õ], *manco* [ã], *niño* [ĩ], *enfermo* [ẽ].

Vowel quantity obeys phonetic laws in Spanish, does not follow historic or etymological traditions, and does not serve to distinguish words from each other as in English *hip: heap; let: late*. Hence, it will be found that vowels are not lengthened to the same extent as those of other languages. English speaking people usually exaggerate the length of Spanish vowels, especially in 'palabras agudas' which are stressed on the last syllable, like *comer, esperó*.

Owing to the smaller tension of the vocal chords the general pitch of Spanish sounds is much lower than in French.

The most careful attention, however, is needed in the articulation of the Spanish consonants. In the first place, for most consonants requiring tongue action, especially for 't', 'd', 'n', 'z', 's', 'r', 'l,' the tongue is further advanced than for the corresponding English sound.

The degree of muscular tension with which the consonants are articulated varies likewise according to the accent, the varying impulse in breathing, and their position in the phonetic group, being greater at the beginning as well as in stressed syllables, smaller between vowels, and smallest at the end, as well as in weak syllables, as in *cierto, certidumbre, lápiz, rama, para, amar, jamás, lunes, mal, nacen, de, seda, sed*.

Initial consonants of a phonetic group are pronounced not only with greater force but at the same time with greater sonority. Thus, for initial 'b,' 'd,' and 'g' after a pause, the vocal chords begin to vibrate before the explosion takes place, as in French, thus, *bueno, don, gana*.

It must be remembered that also 'b,' as well as 'v' after 'n' or 'm' (both being pronounced m)=[b], that 'd' after 'n' or 'l'=[d], and that 'g' after 'n,' [ŋ]=[g], as in *un buen vino, hombre, un día, el domingo, cf. tan bien: también*.

However, for medial 'b,' 'd,' 'g' between vowels in a phonetic group, as well as with most consonants, the air passage is more gently opened without any explosion, so that a kind of semi-fricative sound results, as in *usted ha dado una dedada de miel al abogado, una gabarda, madre, habla*. Concerning these sounds, Navarro Tomás says that they are commonly ignored, even by many teachers, and that he who has not mastered them will always be far from the correct pronunciation. He also warns against the English 'th' sound of 'this' for intervocalic 'd,' since the latter is less interdental, more lax, softer, and shorter than this 'th' sound, which, by the way, occurs also in Spanish in words like *juzar*, due to the influence of the following voiced consonant.

Final 'd' followed by a pause is particularly weak and becomes almost voiceless, as in *usted, libertad, Madrid*.

Since less energy and breath are expended in the pronunciation of Castilian consonants in general, the occlusives [p], [t], [k] are not aspirated, like [p^h], [t^h], [k^h], as in English, German, and American Spanish, but uttered more as in French, as in *tapioca, capital, petaca*. In unaccented syllables, especially before nasal or dental consonants, like 'm,' 'd,' these consonants are often weakened to the semi-fricatives [b], [d], [g], being more or less voiced, as in *aritmética, anécdota, eclipsar*, also in 'cc,' as in *acción*, and 'x' between vowels=[g s] or [s], as in *éxito, examen*, while in many cases these consonants, as well as many others, are dropt in correct pronunciation and often in spelling, in order to avoid awkward consonant combinations, as in *septiembre, sé(p)-tímo, (p)seudo, psicología, o(b)scuró, su(b)scri(p)ción, instrucción, istmo, exponer, exclamar, also exacto [s], auxil- [s], cf. sujeto: subject*.

Medial 's' before 'f' and 'z' is partly absorbed by the latter, as in *esfera*, *escena*.

Due to the decreasing impulse of breath the friction and sonority of a final consonant become very weak, in fact often stop, so that no sound is heard altho the tongue takes the required position for the production of the same, as in *usted*, *cok*, *bock*, *reloj*: *relojes*, but *álbum*=*alun*, *harem* [*n*] or *harén*, cf. *Adán*: *Adam* (E), final 'm' being pronounced like 'n'; also in slowly syllabifying the word, as *em-pe-ra-dor*.

Assimilation, that is, the influence of other sounds, as we have already seen, plays a very great part in Castilian. While with the vowels it is metaphonic assimilation, or vowel harmony, with consonants it is the influence of contact that is most important. Thus, a voiceless consonant becomes voiced before a voiced consonant, as in *desde* [*zd*], *los dedos*, *mismo*, *isla*, *diezmo*, *juzgar*, *la luz del sol*, *aritmética*, *anecdota*.

'b' and 'd' before an occlusive become [*p*] and [*t*], or more frequently retain a slight element of voicing, as in *obtener*, *adquirir*, also in *adjetivo*. Hence assimilation is, as a rule, regressive in Spanish, as in French, whereas it is progressive in English, cf. *observar* [*ps*] (S.): *observer* [*ps*] (F.): *observe* [*bz*] (E.)

It is also due to economy of effort that whenever possible the consonant takes the lip position required by the vowel following it, as in *ni*, *no*, *tu*, *te*, *si*, *su*, etc.

Also two adjoining consonants are usually uttered with one effort of the organs of speech by shifting the place of articulation, as may be seen from the following cases:

1) 'n,' 'l,' 's' take the point of articulation of the following consonant: *donde*, *once*; *alto*, *alzar*; *esta*, *escena*, *esfera*.

2) 'n' before 'f' changes to a sound which is formed between lip and teeth, like [*f*], while breath is passing thru nose, as for [*m*]: *enfermo*.

3) 'n' before 'b,' 'v,' and 'p' becomes [*m*]: *un buen padre*, *invierno* ('nv'=[*mb*]).

4) 'n' before 'ch'=[*ʧ*] = 'ñ': *ancho*.

5) 'n' before [*g*], [*k*], [*x*], = [*ŋ*] (= 'ng' in 'sing'): *un gran conjuez*.

6) 'n' before 'm' is absorbed by the latter: *inmenso*, *con mucho*.

7) 'l' before 'ch'=[*ʧ*] (ll in *llama*): *colcha*.

8) 'y' and 'hi' after 'n' and 'l' become the occlusive sound of 'gy' in 'Magyar' (Hungarian), which is similar to the sound of 'g' in 'gentle' (E.) and for which many foreigners simply substitute 'd' + 'y,' or 'di' in 'cordial': un yerno, el yerno, con *hierro*.

9) 't' and 'd' after 'z' become interdental, as in *hazle acá*, sobre la haz *de* la tierra.

The lack of a fixed place of articulation becomes also apparent in the case of [k] and [x], upon which the vowels have regressive influence, being articulated farthest back before 'u' and farthest in front before 'i.' Nevertheless, [x] never becomes the German 'ch' sound [ç] in 'ich': *dirigir*, *gente*, *jamás*, *jota*, *junta*.

On the other hand, the consonants [x], [k], [g], [n], [l], [r] have regressive influence on the preceding vowel, tending to make it more open, as in *fije* [i], *coje* [ɔ], *seco* [e], *cinco* [ɪ], *hungaro* [ū], *el polo*, *perro*, *perder*.

Two identical consonants coming together, just like two identical vowels, require only one articulation, being however, slightly longer and divided between the two syllables, while a single consonant between two vowels in a stress group is carried over to the next syllable, as *innumerable*: *inhumano*, *un nombre*: *un hombre*, *el loro*: *el oro*, *obvio*, *los señores*, *la luz cenital*, *la juventud dorada*, cf. *carro*: *caro*. However, in strong and emphatic pronunciation, especially where the intervocalic consonant is [n], [l], [r], [s], [θ], [ʃ], or [x], the articulation is divided between the two syllables, without producing the effect of a double consonant, as heard in *un niño*; thus, *uno*, *ala*, *pasa*, *dice*, *café*, *caja*, cf. *la sabes*: *las aves*.

A very common mistake, however, is made by Americans in changing 'ñ' to [n] + [j], and 'll' to [l] + [j], and by dividing them between the two syllables, as in *señor*, *silla*, when they are pronounced [sen-jor], [sil-ja] instead of [se-ɲor], [si-lla].

Similarly, 'ch' is usually described as a sound composed of [t] + [ʃ]. However, it must not be forgotten that occlusion and friction are momentary cf. *mucho*: much (E.). Therefore, the digraph 'ch,' as well as 'll,' is not divided in syllabication, as in *Ba-chi-ller*.

The sound that is perhaps responsible for the most serious and common mistake, especially among English speaking people, is the Spanish 'r.' At the beginning of a word, also after 'n,' 'l,'

and 's,' as well as if doubled, it is regularly trilled and represented by [r], as in *rico*, *Enrique*, *malrotar*, *israelita*, *ferrocarril*. However, in all other cases 'r' consists of a single vibration, or stroke of the tongue point against the upper gums (the alveoles). Since the place of articulation for the Spanish 'r' sound and English 'd' is nearly the same, I regularly begin with the English word 'today' by eliminating [ə] and pronouncing 'd' very quickly, thus [təde: tde]. By adding 'n' and 's' we get the Spanish words *tren* and *tres*. Similarly [də] or [d] may be substituted for 'r' in words like the following: *parte*=[pad(ə)te], *para*=[pada]. In familiar pronunciation this 'r' becomes fricative, sounding like intervocalized 'd' articulated at the alveoles, but not like the 'hollow' American 'r'; cf. *toro*: *todo*, *tomar*: *tomad*: *to mar* (E.).

While these are only a few of the important facts about Spanish pronunciation that are worthy of the careful consideration of the teacher, I hope that they will suffice to convince him that a thoro study of Spanish phonetics offers the best practical basis for acquiring and teaching the standard pronunciation of Spanish.

*South Division High School,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin.*

Editorial Comment

THE attention of the editors has been called to the clever use being made by a publishing house of a rather laudatory review of one of its books which appeared in the *Journal*. All the unfavorable comments have been left out in the "revised" edition and the review in question has been converted into an unqualified puff. It may be considered that the publisher was quite within his commercial rights. Articles in the *Journal* are not copyrighted, and the advertising manager had but to use his scissors skilfully and provide for his wares a rather more readable commendation than those that are usually concocted in the advertising office.

There may be, however, some tender minded persons who will say that this bescissored advertising man, if he had not been so blinded by the dazzling merits of his firm's publication, might have noted that the reviewer had recorded certain judgments not entirely commendatory; and if, further, he had been sincerely anxious to inform the teaching public completely, he might have put in just a word about certain obvious defects in the book which had been duly noted in the review. But no; he took the rose and left the thorn. Nor did he, as far as our records go, send a check at space rates either to the author of the article or to the editorial office. It was, perhaps, a more serious offence to have overlooked this little ceremony than to have failed to clip the bitter with the sweet. However, it would be safe to wager that he just did not think of it. A man intelligent and discriminating enough to read, mark, and clip the *Journal's* reviews is not just an advertising man. He is able to recognize the value of opinion expressed in our columns, and to perceive that our reviewers praise in terms choice enough to be converted, indirectly, into real money. We would respectfully point out to him, however, that from the review in question it was quite clear that the writer is well acquainted with the Direct Method, and would have quite understood any

approach in that spirit, and that even the editorial office and that of the business manager are no strangers to its procedure. Even if the editors should hesitate to supply advertising copy from the columns of the *Journal* at space rates, they could certainly reply directly to the question: "May we reprint your article for advertising purposes, underlining the praise and entirely omitting the blame?"

This, however, is perhaps too much to expect. Therefore instead of raising a warning finger at the vigilant and intelligent advertising manager, we turn rather to take counsel with our contributors on the nature and function of a review.

Perhaps most teachers are weary of or dissatisfied with the first language book they are using and would welcome a change. Many are eager to try a "direct method" text, in the hope that they will find there a remedy for all their difficulties. These are not frivolous reasons. After ten years of the same text, few can be condemned for giving another a try, and it is surely not unwise to modify one's class room procedure from time to time. Not many teachers, however, are in a position to examine a new book critically and objectively, to test it by certain fairly definite standards applied to its main features, and thus to reach a well considered judgment. This our reviewers are expected to do, and not to be led to excessive praise or blame by some one feature of the volume before them. We illustrate. In the review that occasioned this discussion the writer was evidently so much pleased to find well applied in the book certain favorite principles of method that these came in for detailed comment, whereas certain obvious and serious defects were disposed of, correctly, but so briefly, as to escape the notice even of an observant advertising man. On the other hand, we have on our desk what was sent as a review of another book, in which the writer quite ignores the evident merits of the volume in method of presentation, and arraigns vigorously the linguistic inaccuracies and oversights in the text. Authors should of course be called to account, and severely, for such sins, but an article that does this alone should hardly be called a review. It offers, to be sure, no temptation to the scissors of the advertising agent. Neither does it give an inquiring teacher satisfactory aid in forming a judgment and should be entitled rather "Remarks, etc.," than a review.

One aim in composing a review might well be so to weave commendation in with objection that even the discriminating scissors of the publisher's agent could not separate them. In doing this the writer would attain also an even more desirable end: he would make the review represent adequately the book under examination in its combined strength and weakness; and this is the function of a review.

Now since the very real value of our wares has been established by the fact that they can be utilized for a commercial purpose, we feel emboldened to make more use of them ourselves and should like to direct the attention of our reviewers, of editors of texts, and of our good friends the publishers to two extremely useful articles in the *Journal*. The first, by R. T. Holbrook, on editing texts, appeared in Volume I. It should be studied and carefully considered by all publishers and by all editors of modern language texts. The other, by J. S. Deihl, is particularly pertinent to the topic of this editorial comment, as is suggested by its title: "Choosing a grammar for beginners" (II, p. 368). Olympian persons like the editors of the *Journal* are often astonished that editors of texts are frequently willing to work so rapidly as to offer for publication some of the poorly done notes and vocabularies that accompany certain editions of school and college texts, that publishers should be found so poorly informed and so careless of the standards of their own firm as to put them on the market under their *imprimatur*, and that some of our conscientious reviewers go through the pages patiently noting every mistake. There have been lately several rather noteworthy instances of this, duly recorded in the reviewing pages of the various journals devoted to modern languages. Our calm is also ruffled now and then by the failure of the authors of beginners' books and of reviewers of beginners' books to read the *Journal* with sufficient care as to avoid the pitfalls into which the unguided fall; and by the curious blindness of the publisher's clipping bureau to those paragraphs in our pages, which, if properly attended to, would prove so profitable as to enable them to do something handsome, such as to advertise so liberally in the *Journal* as to enable us to enlarge our issues and publish still more profitable matter, or, perhaps, to pay our contributors enough, possibly, to cover their outlay for typewriting and postage.

What are modern language teachers going to do about some of the difficulties that confront us? The question of inadequate pay is general. It is true, we hear, that teachers of certain other newer branches command higher salaries than we do. Perhaps in the natural sciences, too, the pay is more nearly adequate to the demands. But we are, in general, on the same footing as the great majority, and must fight our way upward with them, or disappear with them, as President Neilson of Smith almost fears we and they will do. That is a general economic question.

However, the war has done more than cut our salaries. It has decreased our numbers and vastly increased, for the present at least, the demands on those in the Romance languages, and there are signs that in a few years students of German will be much more numerous than at present. Furthermore, on the part of "educators" and certain administrators the opposition to any widespread study of languages in the public schools is gaining strength, and as it is they rather than we who decide policies and determine curricula, we must seek a way of reaching the thinking public if we have something to say on the subject that is worthy of their attention. We are being called upon by advocates of educational measurements to demonstrate our usefulness, to state in positive terms just what contribution we make to a child's education. Now if such demonstrations of generally acknowledged validity exist for other cultural subjects, we should feel ashamed not come forward with some for ours; if, on the other hand, the demand is unreasonable and based on false assumptions, we should be able to point this out, and thus blunt the edge of the weapons that are turned against us.

Two reports of great interest should be before us soon: one of the committee of the M.L.A. on the training of modern language teachers in our colleges and universities; the other of an N.E.A. committee on languages in the secondary schools. We are told that the latter is held up because the administrative element of the reviewing committee will not accept the recommendations of the language experts. This is symptomatic, for though we have not seen the report, it may be safely assumed that the language men have not taken an unreasonable stand. It would be well to have these reports made public. They should be very useful to teachers,

to those who are training teachers, and to prospective teachers seeking guidance.

But it is possibly time to do something more. At the July meeting of the modern language section of the N.E.A. a committee representing the National Federation was appointed to draw up a brief statement of values and aims and a set of resolutions, which should be at once a sort of *credo* for the members of the profession, and an exposition of our stand for the public. At the same time it was voted to invite the M.L.A. to appoint a co-operating committee. These groups are now in existence, but it is not quite clear to us just what they are to do. It is open to question whether such a brief statement of aims and values accompanied by resolutions would carry any special weight with the public. We should, in all probability, be merely repeating without any significant additions, what has been so often said. Hence the question arises whether the main business of these two committees may not well be to determine if the time is at hand for a more extensive investigation and report than is authorized under the mandate of the committee of the National Federation, and so to recommend to their respective organizations. At this point our thoughts naturally turn to the excellent British report on Modern Studies, which is in many respects a model of its kind, though it is obvious that the differences between conditions here and in the British Isles are too great for this document to be more than suggestive. Perhaps, then, the two existing committees should address themselves to this question, and should report to the meeting of the M.L.A. at Columbus at the end of this month whether, in their judgment, two committees or a joint committee of the M.L.A. and the National Federation should take in hand an extensive study of the present situation with a view to determining where we stand, materially and spiritually, so to speak, in the educational process, and how valid is the claim of our subjects to a permanent place among the leading cultural branches; and further whether this committee or committees should not have the power to seek the aid of individuals from other fields: school administrators, educational psychologists, men from business and other professions. It would be a large undertaking and funds for its prosecution would have to be provided. The investigators should be chosen with great care, and should be willing and able to give much time and thought to the task.

The excellent report of the Committee of Twelve is no longer applicable to modern language conditions in our schools and colleges; the reports of the two committees referred to several paragraphs above are definitely limited in scope. Is there a genuine need for an inquiry into the situation as it is which shall take the place of the now obsolescent report of the Committee of Twelve, and which, by supplementing and rounding out the forthcoming reports of the other two committees, shall offer to educators and to the public in general a competent and thorough going presentation of the present position of modern languages in our whole educational system, and of the rôle they should play for the next two decades in the task of educating the youth of America for their manifold obligation to earn a livelihood, to carry on the work of civilized beings, and to live their own lives to the fullest?

Notes and News

The response to an appeal for some one in each state to act as correspondent for the *Journal* (see the October issue, editorial comment) has not been great. The present editors are learning afresh daily how difficult it is to get authentic news from the field, especially from the secondary schools. However a few generous souls have been found. We publish their names here both as examples of what some forty other persons should be doing, and to beg our readers within their respective territories to communicate to them all items that should reach subscribers to the *Journal*:

Arkansas, Fannie A. Baker,	Nebraska, Abba Willard
Fort Smith High School	Bowen, Peru State Normal
California, E. C. Hatch, Poly-	School
technic High School,	Ohio, E. B. de Sauzé, Director
San Francisco,	of Modern Languages, Cleve-
Iowa, Chas. E. Young, State	land
University, Iowa City	South Dakota, Caroline Dean
Kansas, Mabel Duncan, Senior	Wisconsin, B. Q. Morgan, Uni-
High School, Arkansas City	versity of Wisconsin, Madi-
Louisiana, L. C. Durel, Tulane	son
University	

For the items that follow we are indebted to these loyal friends and to others. We hope earnestly to publish a much longer list of correspondents next month and to be able each month to print many items of real interest to most of our subscribers. It is only so that the *Journal* can be anything more than a collection of monographs. The monographs are essential; they are the *raison d'être* of the publication, but many of our readers demand that our pages be also a record of events as well as of ideas, that they reflect the material as well as the intellectual activity of the teachers of our subjects. Let them aid us. Let our Notes and News department be a chronicle of happenings of many kinds in our field, just as our other pages represent the progress of American pedagogical thought.

The editors have been making an especial effort to find suitable correspondents all over the country. In reply to one appeal came the following from an important eastern city: "I do not think I could send you very interesting copy for the *Journal*. Our department of Modern Languages is the same as yours, as all departments of Modern Languages in the United States: the department of

lame ducks—the rehabilitation department. When the department expanded, teachers of chemistry, Latin, stenography, English were called in to lend a hand, and when German was abolished most of the teachers of that language were given French or Spanish programs. You would not like to know any more of that pitiful condition. You hear enough of it, I suppose."

How many of our readers will maintain that this correspondent's statements are representative?

The death was announced last month of Professor Calvin Thomas of the German department of Columbia University, for many years a leading figure in the field of modern languages both as a scholar and a teacher. It is especially by his work in the critical study of Goethe that his name will be remembered among scholars, while his most significant efforts as a teacher were his authorship of a widely used grammar and his leadership in the production of the valuable report of the Committee of Twelve.

Arthur G. Merrill, for a number of years teacher of German at the Francis Parker School of Chicago, died of spinal meningitis last month at the age of 47. Mr. Merrill was one of the most prominent language teachers in the secondary schools of the central west. For a number of years he had conducted with considerable success *Aus Nah und Fern*, a small periodical for use in German classes, and founded recently similar periodicals for French (*Le Nouveau Monde*) and for Spanish (*El Panorama*). Mr. Merrill was a tireless worker. His untimely death will be deplored by many members of the profession.

The French government announces with just pride the reopening of the University of Strasburg under the new régime. We are told that this is now the largest and best equipped of all provincial French universities, and that its library is even larger and finer than that of the Sorbonne, containing more than a million volumes. The French are indebted to the German occupation for the construction of the present spacious university buildings and the assembling of this large number of books. On the register of the new faculty are some names well known on this side: Paul Sabatier, (Protestant Theology); Sylvain Lévy (Sanskrit); Adolphe Terracher (French philology); Koszul (English); Fernand Baldensperger (French Literature); Pfister (History of Alsace).

Professor Vito Volterra of the University of Rome, who is also a senator of Italy and directed the National Research Council of Italy during the war, is on a scientific and friendly mission in the United States. He has been speaking at various universities, among them Texas, Illinois and Chicago. At the last named he

gave a lecture before the Mathematics and Physics Club on "The Propagation of Electricity in a Magnetic Field," and spoke before the Romance Club on "L'intesa intellettuale."

A correspondent writes from New York: "We are trying to organize the French teachers but find them very slow in showing interest in any organized endeavor to improve their interests. I wonder why this is? Professors and teachers in other parts of the country write me of a similar unreadiness of French teachers to work together. . . . I've tried for two years to get something started among teachers of French here. . . . Teachers of Spanish seem to display, at least here . . . considerably more *esprit de corps* than do the French teachers." Like our correspondent, we are much puzzled by this general condition, if it is a general condition, and seek light from our readers. We too have found it difficult to get French teachers together for professional meetings, but had been inclined to explain the difficulty as arising, not from the fact that they were teachers of French, but merely much overworked teachers with very little free time for rest, amusement, and instruction. Is this less marked in other branches? It may be also that French studies have been longer established in the schools than Spanish and that the teachers are less conscious of having their way to make.

The Fall meeting of the Boston group of the New England M.L.A. took place at Boston University on November 15 with Miss Mary Stone Bruce presiding and Miss Louise Gambrill as Secretary. Papers were read by Miss Gertrude Myles of Newton High School on "First Steps in French," by Professor Alice H. Bushee of Wellesley on "Helps in the Teaching of Spanish," and one by Professor Louis J. Mercier of Harvard entitled "Wanted: Vitalized Repetitions."

It is announced that the Modern Language Conferences of the N.Y. State M.L.A. which had been discontinued during the war are being resumed for the present year. Section meetings are scheduled as follows: Oct. 25, Syracuse Central High School; Nov. 1, Newburgh Free Academy; Dec. 6, Elmira Free Academy; Feb. 14, Hutchinson-Central H.S., Buffalo; Feb. 28, Utica Free Academy; March 6th, Albany H.S.; March 13, East H.S., Rochester; March 20, Mount Vernon H.S.; April 17, Freeport H.S.

Three papers were read before the modern language section of the N.E. Ohio T.A. which met at Cleveland on Oct. 25. Professor R. P. Jameson of Oberlin discussed "Club and Extra-Class Activities," advising that the work of a Club include the reading of

some popular book with discussions, the study of some period or author. He gave also a list of games and pointed out the value of such exercises. Professor Baker of Oberlin spoke of the abundant inspiration to be found in the teaching and study of Spanish literature. Dr. de Sauzé, Director of Foreign Languages in the Cleveland schools, discussed the organization of the French work in the junior high school and how it may be correlated with that of the senior high school. He deplored the too frequent mistake of choosing texts that are either over formal and dull or else too juvenile, and maintained that the difficulties of promotion would be largely solved by the use of one well-graded lesson book in both junior and senior high school, and by considering three semesters work in the former as the equivalent of two in the senior high school.

Our correspondent from Arkansas reports that the interest in French and Spanish in the schools of the state is very strong. Some 3,000 teachers belong to the State Teachers' Association which met at Little Rock, Oct. 28-Nov. 1, on which occasion there was a meeting of the Foreign Language section.

The seventh annual meeting of the Association of Modern Language Teachers of the Middle States and Maryland took place on Nov. 29 at the University of Pennsylvania. The general subject was "Attainable Aims in modern language teaching in colleges and in secondary schools." Professors Buffum of Princeton and Isabelle Bronk of Swarthmore spoke for the colleges; Messrs. F. S. Hemry of Tome Institute and L. A. Wilkins, Acting Director of modern languages for New York City, spoke for the schools. The meeting was presided over by the president, L. A. Roux of Newark Academy. Miss Anna Woods Ballard of Columbia is the Secretary-Treasurer of the Association.

President Birge of the University of Wisconsin spoke in behalf of the rôle of the language teacher at the recent meeting of the Wisconsin State Teachers' Association at Milwaukee. Some forty teachers attended the meeting of the modern language section.

The following letter was prepared by one of the associate editors of the Journal for distribution in her region. Both the idea

and the content are so excellent that the managing editor ventures to publish it as the expression of what he would say again and again to our readers. Will Miss Whitney forgive him?

According to the constitution of the Federation of Modern Language Teachers, the board of editors who have conducted the *Modern Language Journal* successfully through this first three years of life have now retired and a new board has been appointed. Professor A. Coleman has been appointed managing editor for the next three years and I have been made one of the associate editors with the special task of getting material for the *Journal* from the Eastern section of the country. We want live articles on all phases of modern language teaching and modern language study, and we want to make more than has been done heretofore of the department of "Notes and News." It should be a medium of exchange of ideas and experience for all teachers in our line and should help to keep us all alert and up to date. Will you not help us in this by sending us yourself or by urging others in your neighborhood or among your friends and colleagues to send us brief items about devices planned or tried out in the class room or in preparation, whether successfully or unsuccessfully, texts which have proved of special value and interest or the reverse, books which have stimulated pupils to outside reading or which you have found of use to yourself as a teacher, etc., etc. Have any of your former pupils reported as having found their work in the languages useful in their war experience, either here or abroad? I shall be most grateful for any items sent or any suggestions made. The East must continue to be well represented in our *Journal*. Matter sent before the tenth of each month will appear in the following issue. We are very anxious to have the secondary schools and especially the High Schools well represented.

Have you any longer article in mind or can you suggest any one who has?

Olin H. Moore, assistant professor of Romance languages at Illinois has accepted an associate professorship in the same department at Northwestern.

Carl A. Krause of Jamaica High School, New York City, has just returned to America from Europe.

B. J. Vos, who was a member of the editorial staff and closely associated with the founding of the *Journal*, has returned from a mission to Holland to his post at Indiana University.

Alfred G. Nolle, formerly of the German department of the University of Missouri, is now professor of Modern Languages in the Southwest Texas Normal College at San Marces.

Albert L. Guérard has returned to his post at Rice Institute, Houston, Texas, after nearly two years military duty in France. Professor Guérard entered an officer's training camp in 1917 and secured a commission.

Rudolph Altrocchi, who was attached to the American Committee of Public Information in Italy in 1918 and as such had charge of the division of lectures, and who later secured a commission in the intelligence division of the A.E.F. and was stationed for some months at Lyon, has resumed his work in Italian and French at the University of Chicago.

Arthur Hamilton, formerly instructor in Spanish at Wisconsin, who went to France on Red Cross service, returned to America in the summer to take an appointment in the Romance department at Illinois.

The campaigns for funds by various important institutions are being watched with interest by all teachers. Boston Tech. is well on its way to the seven million total it will secure if the school can raise three million itself, as "Mysterious Mr. Smith" will in that case give four of the seven. The list of donors thus far indicates that many non-Tech. men are subscribing generously, thus showing their appreciation of the value of the institution to the country. The Institute has 3,000 students this fall as compared with a previous average attendance of 2,000.

Barry Cerf, associate professor of French at the University of Wisconsin, who secured a captaincy in the Chemical warfare service, was made dean of the Army Educational Detachment at Nancy after the armistice, and returned to Madison only after the cessation of activities overseas.

Stephen H. Bush, professor of Romance Languages at Iowa State, was among the first to respond to the call for men to serve in the Foyers du Soldat. He was assigned to the Moroccan Division and followed the Foreign Legion in the campaigns of the last two years of the war. After the armistice he was prominently associated with the educational work with the American troops, and returned to Iowa City for the present academic year.

J. T. Lister, Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill., goes to the College of Wooster, Ohio, as head of the Spanish Department.

A. C. Gilligan, Assistant Professor of Romance Languages, Miami University, goes to Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill., to a similar position.

Felix Held, who did excellent service on the Ohio Food Commission, for the past year, has been retained as Registrar of the Economics division of the Ohio State University, Columbus, O.

W. F. Luebke, goes from an assistant professorship of German in Iowa State University to a professorship of English at Westminster College, Wilmington, Pa.

The French House at the University of Wisconsin is now well under way in its second season, with its success and usefulness fully assured. Friends of French culture have donated complete furnishings, so that the undertaking should be self-supporting from now on. There are about seventeen girls living in the house, several of whom are natives of France, and in addition, meals are served to both men and women students not resident in the house. As far as possible, the entire atmosphere of the house is French, the idea being to give the girls who live in the house something like the advantage which they would have from a visit to France. It is the unanimous opinion of students that the house is a great success. Not only is the conversational practice unexampled, but the house-mates have the further advantage of being brought into close association for several months with other students of like intellectual interests—something which hardly any other type of student organization does. Finally, it is hoped that by having the French girls who come here on scholarships live in the French House, and thus introducing them to our American life with the least possible abruptness, we may contribute a little to the promotion of international understanding, now recognized everywhere as of prime importance. It is to be hoped that similar establishments will be attempted at every school where there is sufficient interest in French to give the venture a fair chance of success.

In the last number of the *Journal*, we announced that Professor Giese of the University of Wisconsin was on leave of absence. On learning of the very acute situation caused by the unprecedented registration in French this year, Professor Giese returned to the university, and is now teaching again.

The following is an extract from a letter just received by the head of the department of German in one of our women's colleges from a former student who had specialized in German during her course and taught it for a few years before the war began. It is interesting as going to prove that no good work is ever wasted and that a person who has learned to do one thing thoroughly well can apply the methods and habits of industry thus acquired in any

other like work when occasion offers. "Being a councillor at a camp is great fun, as I found this summer. I was asked to go to the camp to preside over the French table in partnership with a French-speaking Swiss girl.—Organizing the work in French and giving private lessons in that language were my chief duties. You see, the arrangement: i.e., having the French-speaking girl do the conversation while I did the teaching, was an application of your theory that Americans are very valuable in teaching the structure of a foreign language. Although of course I do not pretend to know a great deal about French I found that I could be of great assistance to girls who were finding it difficult to keep their footing in a constant flow of colloquial French.—Perhaps I should never have had a chance to do work of this kind if I had not acted upon something you once said to me. You remarked that the way to learn French was to read, read, read. Three years ago, as you know, I did not know any French at all. Naturally I became interested in learning something about it when the war came on, so I began to read. I found a phonetic system which helped me in the pronunciation and a series of books by L. C. Syms was good for verbs. But principally I just read. Then I was fortunate in finding here in M. a cultivated French woman who was willing to give me an hour of conversation weekly and who faithfully corrected the many letters I wrote to her. When I began visiting Mme D. I seemed to be just at the point where I wanted to burst into speech so my progress in talking was very fast, and I was soon giving private lessons here in M. My whole experience in French has been very pleasant and I realize how much of it I owe to the thorough training in languages which I received at College."

In the January number of the *Journal* we expect to publish some data on registration in the languages in various institutions. Such information is hard to get, and what we have is crowded out of this issue.

The modern language section of the Nebraska State Teachers' Association met in Omaha, November 6, with Miss Elizabeth Kingsbury of the Wayne State Normal in the chair. Miss Pearl Rockfellow of the Omaha Central High School led a discussion of whether Spanish should be taught in the smaller high schools, and was followed by Professor Warshaw of the University of Nebraska and by Miss Alma Hasic of the Kearney State Normal. It appeared from data submitted by the president, Miss Kingsbury, that French is now being taught in 55 of 213 Nebraska schools reporting. Professor Parmenter of the University of Chicago then presented a paper on the "Teaching of French Phonetics," in which he stated the arguments in favor of the phonetic method and outlined a suitable procedure for the first

few weeks of the course. The following officers were elected for 1920-21: President, Annetta Sprung, Lincoln H. S.; Vice-President, J. Warshaw, University of Nebraska; Secretary, James Brittain, Crofton H. S.

Reviews

Report of the Committee on the Position of Modern Languages in the Educational System of Great Britain. (His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1918). xxiii+258 pp.

The purpose of this report is "to enquire into the position occupied by the study of Modern Languages in the educational system of Great Britain, especially in Secondary Schools and Universities, and to advise what measures are required to promote their study, regard being had to the requirements of a liberal education, including an appreciation of the history, literature, and civilisation of other countries, and to the interests of commerce and public service." The real subject of the report is Modern Studies, which the committee says "signify all those studies (historical, economic, literary, critical, philological, and other) which are directly approached through modern foreign languages. 'Modern Studies' are thus the study of modern peoples in any and every aspect of their national life, of which the languages are an instrument as necessary as hands, and feet, and heart, and head."

There is an introductory chapter on the history of Modern Languages in Great Britain, followed by a chapter on the neglect of their proper study at present. The remedy for this neglect is to convince the public that they are worth while. As propaganda to convince the public of the value of Modern Studies from the commercial as well as from the cultural viewpoint the matter is ably presented, and this chapter merits especial attention by all Modern Language teachers. The relative value of the Modern Languages is determined by four criteria: the significance of the people in the development of modern civilization, the intrinsic value of their literature, their contribution to the valid learning of our times, practical use of their language in commercial and other national intercourse. For great Britain, French is adjudged to be far and away the most important language; German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish, are next in importance, but on account of unsettled conditions at the date of the report no attempt is made to rank these.

A discussion of instruction in Modern Studies makes up the second part of the report. The committee recommends that a child begin his first language at about the age of twelve; if he shows sufficient ability, a second language may be begun after two years. A small percentage of students will be found who have no language

faculty and these should be permitted to drop languages altogether. Emphasis must be placed on an adequate knowledge of one language rather than on a smattering of two or more. The direct method is preferable with properly qualified teachers under suitable conditions. Phonetics properly used are almost indispensable but inaccurate phonetics are worse than none. There is a strong plea for a better adjustment of examinations to modern methods of teaching and that they should receive the careful attention of properly trained men with a "gift" for examining. Oral tests as well as written should be used whenever possible, and not only pronunciation, ability to speak, etc., but also the benefit derived by the student from his study, should be thoroughly tested, at least at the later stages of instruction.

The report considers it "desirable that every teacher of a modern language in a Secondary School should have a University degree, should have spent not less than a year abroad under suitable conditions, and should have undergone definite training for his profession." It also recommends as "most desirable" that there should be a certificate guaranteeing an "adequate training in and mastery of phonetics" and "a thorough knowledge of the written and the spoken language, with a satisfactory standard of pronunciation and enunciation." A "Higher Certificate" is also recommended—to be acquired after about five years of experience in teaching, plus "evidence oral and written, of further progress in the language and its scholarship and in other necessary knowledge." The great majority of teachers should be British, but native teachers are very valuable for the study of pure language.

Even though this report bears primarily on Modern Languages in Great Britain, no modern language teacher in this country can afford to neglect it. The chapters on study abroad, on the organization of instruction in the Secondary Schools and the Universities and their faculties, on general method in language teaching, and examinations, discuss problems of vital interest to the progress of Modern Languages in this country. Aside from this the high ideal so eloquently and persistently set forth ought to be a spur and a stimulant to the most indifferent instructor.

JAMES KESSLER

University of Chicago.

The Elements of French by OLIN H. MOORE, Ph.D., and JOSEPHINE T. ALLIN, Chicago-New York, Scott, Foresman and Company, 1919. xxxii+392 pp. Price \$1.20.

The material get-up, typographical arrangement, binding and paper of this book are most attractive, and the illustrations, dif-

ferent from the hackneyed kind, are remarkably well chosen and pleasing to the eye.¹

The work contains three main parts, an introduction dealing with the phonetics of the French language, syllabication, accents, punctuation, etc.; 126 Lessons with exercises and reviews;² and lastly an appendix containing a more synthetic presentation of the grammatical rules.

Besides these three main parts, ten pages are allotted to reading material, although short poems and prose fragments are also scattered throughout the body of the book. A brief section contains the notes and words of the *Marseillaise*, *la Bonne Aventure*, *Frère Jacques*, and *Fais dodo Colas*. A complete vocabulary with phonetic transcription of each word, an index, and a page of syntactical *tolérances* end the volume.

It has been the authors' aim to meet the needs of practically all types of teachers: the experienced and the inexperienced, those wedded to the grammar-translation method, and those who see salvation only in the exclusive use of the language taught; those who make use of phonetic principles and symbols to teach pronunciation, and those who prefer the old-fashioned imitation method. Difficult as such a feat may appear, the reviewer is bound to admit that the authors have succeeded in their difficult task, and that they have done it well.

The phonetic principles are explained clearly, simply and with sufficient completeness in the introduction. Excellent advice, which will be welcomed by many teachers, is given the learner for practising difficult sounds like *u* and *eu*, *in*, *an*, *on*, and others. But these principles are not relegated to the introduction only; well thought out drill exercises and phonetic readings precede the lessons at least as far as the 27th, and they are intended to fix the principles, to call attention to the mode of production of the sounds, and to furnish continuous practice with the guiding rules in mind. Only two or three sounds are treated in each exercise. In the authors' own words, "the only vowels in Lessons 1 and 2 are front vowels, in Lessons 3 and 4 back vowels are found for the first time. . . . The troublesome French *u* and other rounded front vowels appear in Lessons 10 and 11. The student is referred in each lesson to sections in the phonetic introduction, so that each lesson in grammar may become at the same time a lesson in pronunciation."

¹ The pages on which the map of France and the plan of Paris appear, are wrongly indicated in the table of illustrations.

² Why do the authors use the word *Révision* as heading of their review exercises? *Revue* is the term commonly used in this case. *On passe une leçon en revue*, or *On fait la revue d'une leçon*; but *On fait la révision d'un livre*, *d'un procès* (to correct errors, or to improve).

From the foregoing it might be inferred that the matter of phonetics is obtrusively omnipresent in this grammar, but such is not the case, a very judicious balance between the essential and the unessential being maintained throughout. Teachers who use the phonetic method either wholly or in part, will find the book very helpful, while those who do not care for it, can conveniently omit these drill exercises. It is to be presumed that all teachers make use of the minimum of phonetics, the international alphabet or an adaptation of it, for no good objection can be brought against it, and it does offer obvious advantages. As stated above, a phonetic transcription accompanies each new word, and the whole of Lessons 1 to 11 is phonetically transcribed at the end of the introduction. It may be stated that in few grammars is more care bestowed upon the matter of pronunciation. This is but the logical corollary of the authors' expressed conviction, namely, that "the problem of pronunciation is the most serious one now confronting French teachers," a position which is tenable though not unassailable. Students with the best pronunciation are generally the best in a class, but it is debatable whether they are the best because of their pronunciation, or whether they pronounce well because they are the best.

In the presentation of the grammatical principles, the authors depart somewhat from the common proceeding in elementary books which aim at a measure of completeness. Thus the indefinite article is first given in Lesson 10, together with the cardinal numbers from 1 to 4; the complete present indicative of *avoir* occurs in Lesson 14 as do the numerals from 5 to 10; in Lesson 17 the negative and negative-interrogative forms of *avoir* and the contractions of *de* with the article are explained; the full present of *être* is first given in Lessons 22 and 26, and the contractions of *à* with the article in 27. The partitive use is explained in Lessons 17, 21 and 59 (words of quantity); the first explanation of the imperative is made only in Lesson 87, although imperatives are used as early as Lesson 3, and *je suis, vous êtes, j'ai, vous avez, je ferme, je regarde* etc., are used in conversational drills in the earlier lessons, but without any light on the subject other than a translation in the vocabularies preceding the lessons. In Lesson 38 the numbers from 50 up are given. Very logically, the *passé défini*, the subjunctive and other less important matters are left for the later lessons.

Some might find this piecemeal treatment of the grammatical elements somewhat disconnected and "scrappy." Yet, this concentric method, gradually building up around a simple and easily assimilated nucleus, is considered good pedagogy in other sciences. It tends to fix first—and most important—principles, to establish firm bases on which to erect a more elaborate structure. Its most obvious drawback in the study of a language is that it

compels confining oneself to insignificant and uninteresting subjects until far advanced in the book; that it prevents the bright pupil from applying his knowledge by making up sentences on his own initiative, and from practising conversation outside the class, because he has to wait until he comes to lesson so and so before he can express a complete idea.³

This is the most serious criticism I feel tempted to make of this otherwise excellent book. There is an abundance of practice material, but it is rather dry, uninteresting, and devoid of information other than linguistic. The extracts in prose are unduly brief, at least in the early lessons, and, taken out of their setting, often meaningless, while the poems are a little too childish for college classes. Many of them are nursery jingles or folk songs heard only in the mouths of little children. From the linguistic point of view, they are often poor models for beginners since, owing to the rhythm, the pronunciation is often at variance with the principles instilled with such laudable zeal. Would it not be more advantageous to compose interesting little pieces, dialogues, descriptions, narratives, with elements already acquired or new ones to be studied? Is it necessary that elementary language books should be tedious? It seems to me that Professor Giese has shown in both his French and Spanish grammars—the most original things ever done along this line in America—that a language method may be pedagogically sound, yet interesting and informing.

The objection loses of course much of its force where the book is used by the "born teacher" who knows how to hold the attention of his classes even with the most purely technical matters. Neither is it intended to prejudice against a work which sins no more in this respect than the majority of other grammars now in common use, and which, I repeat it, is first rate in most other respects. It is moreover easy to use an elementary reader at an early stage, and in this case the grammatical appendix will be found very useful for quick reference.⁴

J. L. BORGERHOFF

Western Reserve University.

³ Besides, it leads to actual mistakes. On page 34, the translation exercise contains the sentences: "What will you have?—I'll have some bread etc." Again on page 37: "I'll eat lunch now. I'll take some broth today." Surely the future is in order in those sentences, but the future is as yet unknown, and the student is directed and compelled to use the wrong present. (And by the way, is "broth" the correct translation of *bouillon*?). On page 104: "He lent me some money." The "me" is unknown at this stage. Page 109, second line: "We intended" (imperfect required, and the imperfect has not yet been studied). In the same exercise "sent to him" (this dative is explained only at a later stage).

⁴ The book is remarkably free from actual errors or misprints, and only the following have been noticed.

Lesson 28. In the vocabulary the word *dos* should be phonetically transcribed (do); in the same vocabulary *par-dessus* and *pardessus* are trans-

THREE SPANISH TEXTS.

I

Por Tierras Mexicanas. By MANUEL URIBE-TRONCOSO. World Book Co. 1919.

In the 127 pages of Spanish Text the author has given us a brief statement of the geography of Mexico, an interesting outline of Mexican history, and some account of the resources, industries and railways. The text closes with a chapter on the life of the Mexicans and one on some present day problems.

The book is intended as an easy reader and the purpose has been well realized. It is suitable for use in the average second year class or for rapid or supplementary reading in more advanced classes. Being for the most part a plain narrative, its style is simple throughout, so that the author has found it possible to dispense with notes. The vocabulary appears to be complete and adequate.

The absence of exercises in no way detracts from the value of the book. The reasons for omitting them have been well stated in the preface.

The little volume has been well illustrated. The type is large and clear and the proof-reading has evidently been done with great care. Attractive in appearance and without a single dull page, the book will be welcome to both pupils and teachers. What is more it should perform a real service in extending our knowledge of our sorely-tried sister republic and in enabling our young people to appreciate better her difficulties and problems.

cribed (pardsy), whereas elsewhere *je ne suis pas, je ne porte pas* are indicated as having *ne* fully pronounced. In practice however, we would say: *jen' port' pad' pardessus*, with the *e* of *pardessus* sounded. On page 68, sentence 6 of the Exercice oral should read: *Jouez-vous de la main gauche ou de la main droite? Avec* would mean something quite different. Page 91 (c), the rule should read: Verbs in *-eler* and *-eter* generally double the *l* or *t*, because *doubler* and *douter* occur almost at once to contradict the rule as stated. Page 95 (a) *L'unité fait la force*, should be *L'Union* etc. The motto is too well known to take liberties with its wording. Page 110, sentence 17 of the Exercice oral should read *Qu'est-ce qu'elle porte aux pieds*, and not *sur les pieds*. Elsewhere *sur les jambes* is used similarly for *aux jambes*. Page 215, paragraph 202, *J'insiste que vous ouvriez* etc., is wrong; say *J'insiste pour que* etc. Same paragraph (c): pleonastic *ne* is not used with *douter* and *nier* used affirmatively. Page 272, example in (b), paragr. 281: read *je l'ai entendu dire* instead of *entendre dire*. Page 319, first letter: read *je pourrai compter* instead of *je pourrais*. Same page, third letter: *En espérant, Madame, avoir l'honneur de vous revoir, recevez* etc., is a bad construction. Read: *je vous prie de recevoir*. Page 329: The words are not matched to the music in the usual way. Teachers will do well in teaching the Marseillaise to get a different rendering.

II

First Spanish Book. BY FRANK R. ROBERT. Revised for American Schools by ALICE P. HUBBARD. New York. E. P. Dutton and Co. 1919.

This is the fourth edition of the book, especially revised for use in American schools. The first forty-five chapters—152 pages—are devoted to the usual lessons on grammar with appropriate exercises. The reading selection, pages 153–167, seems rather difficult. Then follow some ten pages of fables. There is a commercial excrescence of about fifteen pages which hardly belongs in a book intended for beginners, then a good section on verbs. The book closes with a vocabulary. This is a concise, usable book. The text is simple, the number of new words in each lesson in general small. Attention is called to significant points in grammar but long explanations are lacking. Various exercises according to the direct method are given, brief and simple. The author wisely omits sentences for translation into Spanish.

In the last lessons an attempt is made to give some idea of Spanish conditions and customs. More such chapters as XLII to XLV would have been welcome, but the vocabulary has wisely been limited to a rather small number of good practical words. Each new word on its first appearance is printed in black-type, an expedient which however unaesthetic in effect, is of undoubted value to the beginner. An attractive feature of the book is its wise handling of the verb. The present tense holds the field until Chapter XXXI, where we first meet with the perfect and the future. In Chapter XXXIV, the imperfect is taken up, in Chapter XXXV the preterite, in XXXVI the conditional. The present imperative is used from the outset, but the subjunctive appears only in the reading selections at the end of the volume. Such wise restraint is all too rare.

To the teacher who now and then gets tired of the typical text-book with its encyclopedic and bewildering mass of exercises, this little volume will be most welcome. Simple as it is, the interest is remarkably well sustained. It is not a book for the unfortunate teacher who can keep only two or three lessons ahead of the class, but will give good results in the hands of an experienced, well-prepared teacher. It would seem that the author must have had something of this sort in mind for he has omitted any discussion of Spanish pronunciation.

III

Second Spanish Book. BY WORMAN and BRANSBY.—1918. American Book Co.

This book is so well known to teachers of Spanish that no extended review of it is needed here. The present edition has

been provided with a vocabulary and appears in a new and stronger binding. Text and illustrations are unchanged. The latter are often, perhaps unintentionally, humorous—e.g., those on pages 8, 32, 52, and on this basis alone their retention is justified.

The book is of course intended to follow the *First Spanish Book*, by Worman and Monsanto, published by the same firm. Many teachers, however, who use the "First Book" do not care for the "Second." The books are constructed along the same lines but the second volume seems to be difficult and uninteresting—to lack the spontaneity of the first. When reading material so much more interesting and appropriate is available, a mere drill-book like the volume under discussion is hardly to be recommended for general use.

JOEL HATHEWAY

*High School of Commerce,
Boston, Mass.*